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THE *MÉLODIES* OF HENRI DUPARC

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this essay is to make a thorough examination of the art songs of Henri Duparc.

The first part of the paper will include a detailed biography of the composer, with special consideration of the influence of César Franck and the Schola Cantorum and the environment of La Société nationale (Chausson, Vincent d'Indy and others).

The main body of the paper will consist of an analysis of the art-song style of Duparc as seen in a selection of his mélodies, and will begin with a clarification of the term mélodie. The examination of the songs will include analysis of melodic structure, certain harmonic details, interrelation of voice part and accompaniment, types of piano accompaniment and choice of texts. Duparc's ideal of the art song as an intimate expressive form will be considered, including his own attitudes regarding the style of performance of the voice part.

The songs of Duparc are an especially fruitful area for an investigation of this kind. By French mu-

sicians, these works are regarded as having great expressive power. One writer states,

> Les mélodies de M. Duparc, au moins les dernières, ne ressemblent pas à d'autres mélodies. Elles sont d'une originalité absolue, d'une sève riche et abondante et d'une profondeur de sentiment très rare dans la musique française. Bien que d'une écriture élégante et soignée, elles sont exemptes d'afféterie; leur qualités dominantes, la sincérité, la spontanéité, l'énergie, reflètent celles de l'homme, la franchaise de caractère, l'exubérance de son enthousiasme qui le rendaient si cher à ses amis.[1]

The essay will attempt to determine and clarify some of the means by which this expressivity is accomplished.

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[1]The songs of M. Henri Duparc, at least the later ones, do not resemble any other songs. They are absolutely original, rich and abundant in strength, with a depth of sentiment rarely found in French music. Although written elegantly and carefully, they are without effeteness; their dominant qualities, sincerity, spontaneity and energy, reflect those of the man, that openness of character and exuberant enthusiasm which made him so dear to his friends. Georges Servières, Guide Musical (February 10, 1895).

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Dieu veut que je vive plus intérieurement; il m'a privé de la vue, mais, depuis, ce que j'entends est tellement beau.

--Henri Duparc

PREFACE

At the time of his death, Henri Duparc was an almost forgotten figure of the French musical scene. He had not been active for almost fifty years. His musical reputation derives not from the orchestral works of Poème Nocturne, Léonore and Aux Étoiles but from a very small number of songs for voice and piano, a collection of works that prompted the epithet intimist from his contemporaries. Such songs as "L'Invitation au Voyage", "La Vie Antérieure", "Phidylé" and others, continue to be recognized as expressive works of great passion and tenderness.

Duparc's technique, formed under the direction of César Franck, created a style of deceptive simplicity "where the ideas come from the soul".[1]

He emulated the inherent French style of the mélodie. In the mélodie, as in the German Lied, there must be a perfect balance between the musical structure and poetic content. In accordance with this ideal, the

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[1]From a letter of Duparc to Paul Lacombe, quoted in Paul Landormy, La Musique Française de Franck à Debussy. (Paris: Gallinard, 1943), p. 55.

Duparc songs are a concentration of discreet emotional thought in the mélodie--the unified embodiment of both text and music.

In the midst of rival factions, represented by Richard Wagner and his supporters on the one hand, and César Franck and the Schola Cantorum on the other, Duparc persistently sought the medium of personal expression to which he felt most strongly drawn. As a result

> il a donné à la mélodie française un essor, une ampleur, une puissance qu'aucun de nos compositeurs, si ce n'est Berlioz, n'avait antérieurement soupçonnés et que nul autre, en vérité, n'a dépassés depuis lors.[1]

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[1] Julien Tiersot, Un demi-siècle de Musique française, (Paris: F. Alcan, 1918), p. 158. "He has given to French art song a scope, a fullness and a power which none of our composers except perhaps Berlioz had ever realized before and which no other, indeed, has since surpassed."

CHAPTER I

THE MILIEU OF DUPARC

His Life

Mont-de-Marsan, 23 Nov. 1920.

Monsieur Alexis Rouart,
29, rue d'Astorg, Paris

Cher Ami,
Voici les quelques renseignements que vous me demandez: je vous préviens à l'avance que ce sera pas grand chose, car ma vie absolument rien d'intéressant: . . .et je ne suis tout à fait sûr que de deux choses: la première, c'est que je suis né à Paris le 21 janvier 1848 (deux dates qui semblaient plutôt me prédestiner à être révolutionnaire!), la deuxième, c'est que je ne suis pas encore "fortement défunt" . . .[1]

Henri Duparc was seventy-two years old when he wrote the preceding letter to his friend, Alexis Rouart. At that time, he had not composed for over thirty years, and he was destined to live still another thirteen years in silence.

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[1]A. Mangeot, "Henri Duparc" Le Monde Musical, Vol. XLIV (February, 1933), 35-36. "Here is the information for which you have asked. I give it to you willingly, but I warn you in advance that it is not much, because my life contains nothing of interest. I am sure about two things only: the first that I was born in Paris on 21 January 1848 (two dates which would seem to predestine me to be a revolutionary, the second, that I am not yet 'quite dead' . . ."

He was born Marie Eugène Henri Fouques Duparc at Paris, January 21, 1848, of an upper middle-class family. In 1865, his family sent him to the Jesuit College at Vaugirard with hopes that he would pursue a career in law. He began to study piano with César Franck and later composition, along with Albert Cahen and Arthur Coquard. By the end of 1869, he had made the acquaintance of Vincent d'Indy, who, like Franck, introduced his students to the music and opinions of Richard Wagner.[1] César Franck recognized in Duparc a matured and highly-cultured talent. (He later recalled Duparc as "the most gifted of my pupils".)[2]

Duparc became an admirer of Richard Wagner, and in the summer of 1870, he went to Munich to hear the premiere performance of Die Walküre,[3] which had been written only a month before. Later that year, with the

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[1]Pierre de Bréville, "Henri Duparc," Larousse Mensuel, CCCXV (May, 1933), 403.

[2]Leon Vallas, César Franck, trans. by Hubert Foss (New York: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 261. The author also notes that Franck later dedicated his D minor symphony to Duparc.

[3]Guy Ferchault, "Henri Duparc," Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, ed. by F. Blume (14 vols.; Kassel U. Basel: Baerenreiter-Verlag, 1949-68) III, coll. 957-960. Hereafter this work is referred to as MGG.

outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war, Duparc served with the Eighteenth Batallion of la Garde Mobilé.[1]

In 1871, together with Fauré, Chausson, de Castillon, Saint-Saëns and Chabrier, he organized the Société Nationale de Musique, and later became its first secretary. The purpose of the Société was to promote a nationalism with regard to French music and French musicians.[2]

On the ninth of November, 1871, Duparc married Ellen MacSwiney, of Irish parentage. They had two sons, Marie Henri Charles, born October 10, 1872 and Marie Valentin Léon, born August 6, 1874.[3]

During the next ten years Duparc, often in the company of another young French musician, Emmanuel Chabrier, made several journeys to Munich to hear and also to conduct various Wagnerian performances.[4] In 1870, he and Chabrier attended the first performance of

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[1]Mangeot, op. cit., p. 36.

[2]Bréville, op. cit., p. 403.

[3]Quoted in Sydney Northcote, The Songs of Henri Duparc (London: Dobson, 1947), p. 44.

[4]Octave Séré, [Jean Poueigh], "Henri Duparc", Le Courrier Musical (March, 1933), 108.

Tristan und Isolde. In 1883 and 1886, Duparc travelled to Bayreuth for the Wagnerian festivals.[1]

May 5, 1878 marked the beginning of the Concerts du Musique Moderne. These concerts presented works of French and foreign contemporary musicians. The management of these concerts was taken over by Duparc and d'Indy later that year.

The summers from 1880 to 1885 were spent at Marnes near Paris. During this time, Duparc began to paint, mostly in water colors. Some of these works may be found in the Grand Salon of Mandegourat, near Tarbes.[2]

The first signs of a nervous affliction appeared in his fortieth year and became gradually more perceptible.[3] Duparc lived until 1897 at Monein in the lower Pyrénées. He had developed a plan for an opera based on

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[1] Northcote also mentions a meeting with Wagner at the home of Franz Lizst in Weimar, which took place on one of these trips.

[2] Charles Oulmont, "Un Duparc Inconnu?" La Revue Musicale (July/August, 1935), 86.
This article offers a reproduction of one of Duparc's encre de Chine of which Oulmont states: "Ils [les arbres] traduisent la pensée la plus intime du maître aimé."

[3] This illness has been the subject of a doctoral dissertation: Ferdinand Merle, Psychologie et Pathologie d'un Artiste: Henri Duparc (1848-1933) (Bordeaux: Imprimérie de l'université, 1933).

a work by Pushkin called La Roussalka[1], but his health did not allow him to bring it to fruition.

During the years 1897 to 1906, Duparc lived in Paris, where he met the poet Charles de Bordeau Francis Jammes, who in 1902 accompanied him on a pilgrimage to Lourdes.[2] In 1906, he and his wife retired to Villa Amélie near La Tour-de-Peilz, where he remained until 1913. During the war, they lived with their eldest son, Charles, at Tarbes. After the war, they moved to Mont-de-Marsan. In 1921, he was named Chévalier de la Lègion d'honneur, which was presented him by the French minister, Briand. On the twelfth of August, 1924, he had a cataract operation in vain hopes of restoring his health.[3] He remained at Mont-de-Marsan until his death on February 13, 1933. Henri Duparc died totally blind, and without having composed for nearly half a century.

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[1]For a facsimile reproduction of part of the autograph of La Roussalka, see page 66.

[2]Landormy, op. cit., p. 55.

[3]Vincent d'Indy, Henri Duparc and Albert Roussel, lettres à Auguste Sérieyx, collected and published by M. L. Sérieyx (Lausanne: Editions du Cervin), p. 35. The article states that while Duparc was at La Tour-de-Peilz, he consulted the well-known occulist in Lausanne, August Dufour, but the optical nerve had been permanently damaged.

His Music

Among Duparc's compositions, there are several instrumental works. A sonata for piano and violoncello (1868) and Suite des Valses (1872) were destroyed by him soon after they were written.[1] In 1869, Flaxland published Feuilles volantes, which are six little pieces for piano which Duparc later destroyed.[2] Then came the Laendler (1873), a suite of fantasy dances in triple time. In 1875, his earliest orchestral work appeared, a symphonic ballad after a poem by Bürger, Léonore. It was performed with the orchestra of the Société Nationale, June 24, 1874, later by Pasdeloup at the Concerts Populaires, October 28, 1877, by Colonne at the Trocadero in 1878 and by the orchestra at the Concerts Lamoureux and by the Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris.[3] Cesar Franck later arranged it for four hands and Camille Saint-Saens, for two pianos. Duparc had also written an orchestral

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[1]This seemingly contradictory or unlikely information is quoted in Jean Poueigh, Musiciens français d'aujourd'hui (Paris: Mercure de France, 1921), p. 176.

[2]Landormy, op. cit., p. 55.

[3]Grove's, II, 811. Pasdeloup was a conductor and ardent follower of Wagner. He began the Concerts Populaires in October, 1861. These were exceeded in popularity by the Concerts du Conservatoire under the conductors Colonne and Lamoureux. In 1884, the Concerts Populaires closed, but reopened in 1886 and existed until March, 1887.

nocturne, Aux Étoiles, which was not published until 1910, and a motet for three voices, Benedicat vobis Dominus (1882).[1]

Duparc contributed a total of sixteen songs to the vocal repertoire. By the end of 1868, he had written five of these: "Soupir," "Chanson Triste," "Le Galop," "Sérénade" and "Romance de Mignon".[2] In a letter to Alexis Rouart, publisher and personal friend of the Duparcs, he offers a list of his songs with the dates of composition:

"La Vague et la Cloche"	1871
"L'Invitation au Voyage"	1870
"Phidylé"	1882
"Sérénade Florentine"	1880-81?

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[1] Ibid.

[2] These five songs were published in 1894-95 by Baudoux, a publishing house which was later bought out by Rouart-Lerolle. The Bibliothèque Nationale holds the manuscript. The existence of the three songs "Le Galop,""Sérénade" and "Romance de Mignon" is ignored by many writers. See for example: Northcote, op. cit., p. 13 and Sergius Kagen, Music for the Voice, revised ed. (Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1968), p. 404 and Pierre Bernac, The Interpretation of French Song (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969), p. 61. Laurence Davies, in The Gallic Muse (New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., 1967), p. 30, explains that Durand published the rediscovered second manuscript of "Le Galop" in 1948 and that the remaining two songs were to follow. These do not seem to have appeared in the intervening twenty-three years.

"Extase"	1878
"Le Manoir de Rosemonde"	1879?
"Lamento"	1883
"Testament"	1883
"La Vie Antérieure"	1884
"Chanson triste"	1868
"Soupir"	1868
"Au pays où se fait la guerre"	1869-70[1]

The Franck Circle and Wagnerian Influences

While Henri Duparc was a student of law at the Jesuit College at Vaugirard, he came under the tutilage of César Franck, who has been credited by many authors as one of the major guiding personalities in French music during the latter half of the nineteenth century.[2]

César Franck was born at Liège, Belgium in 1822, and moved to Paris in 1834. In 1837, he entered the Conservatoire de Paris and received many prizes in piano, organ, fugue and counterpoint. His father was impatient

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[1]This list is quoted from Mangeot, op. cit., p. 55. The interrogatives are Duparc's. For a complete list of the vocal and instrumental works of Henri Duparc, consult Table 1, p. 9.

[2]See, for example, Martin Cooper, French Music. (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 26.

TABLE 1

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF HENRI DUPARC

Title	Date	Publisher	Medium
"Chanson Triste" "Soupir" "Le Galop" "Sérénade" "Romance de Mignon"	1868	Baudoux	high voice, except "Le Galop" for baritone
Sonata for violoncello and piano	1868	destroyed	
Feuilles volantes	1869	Flaxland (Durand)	six piano pieces
"Au pays où se fait la Guerre"	1869 or 70	Rouart-Lerolle	medium voice
"L'Invitation au Voyage"	1870	Rouart-Lerolle	high voice
"La Vague et la Cloche"	1871	Rouart-Lerolle	medium voice
"La Fuite"	1871	Demets	duo for soprano and tenor
Suite des Valses	1872	destroyed	
Aux Étoiles	1873	Rouart-Lerolle	nocturne for orchestra
Poème Nocturne	1873	unpublished	orchestral
"Élégie"	1874	Rouart-Lerolle	high voice

TABLE 1, continued

Title	Date	Publisher	Medium
Lénore (Leonore)	1875	Rouart-Lerolle	symphonic poem
Laendler	1874	Rouart-Lerolle	six fantasy dances for piano
"Extase"	1878	Rouart-Lerolle	high voice
"Le Manoir de Rosemonde"	1879	Rouart-Lerolle	high voice
"Sérénade florentine"	1880-81	Rouart-Lerolle	high voice
"Benedicat Vobis Dominus"	1882	?	motet for three voices
"Phidylé"	1882	Rouart-Lerolle	high voice
"Lamento"	1883	Rouart-Lerolle	high voice
"Testament"	1883	Rouart-Lerolle	low voice, medium voice
"La Vie Antérieure"	1884	Rouart-Lerolle	high voice

for him to begin a virtuoso career and so, in 1843, he withdrew César from the Conservatoire.[1] His public concerts did little in launching a performance career in the next two years, and, in 1845, he began to compose extensively.

He went to Notre Dame de Lorette as assistant organist and choir master and, in 1851, he became principal organist at Saint-Jean-Saint François au Morais. In 1858, he assumed the post of organist at Saint-Clothilde, a position he was to hold for over thirty years. It was during the early years of this post that Franck went to Vaugirard to teach solfeggio, piano and composition. From 1872 on, he served as a professor of organ at the Conservatoire.

His students included men who later became distinguished French musicians: Debussy, d'Indy, Chausson, Duparc and others. Duparc had introduced Albert Cahen and Alexis de Castillon to Franck, and from this nucleus grew the "Franckist School". Duparc was also responsi-

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[1] David Ewen, Great Composers 1300-1900 (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1966), p. 132.

ble for introducing Vincent d'Indy to Franck in 1871.[1]

The compositions and teaching of Franck have been the subject of considerable controversy in the literature. Vincent d'Indy says:

> He excelled in the power to penetrate his pupils' thoughts, and to take possession of them, while scrupulously respecting their individual attitudes. This is the reason why all the musicians in his school have acquired a solid science of music, while, in their works, each one has preserved a different and personal aspect.[2]

He goes on to say: "His whole teaching was inspired by something stronger than law--by love itself."[3] César Franck was considered by his students not merely a far-seeing and lucid teacher, but a father, hence the name pater seraphicus.[4]

In a description of the essential qualities regarding Franck's music, Leland Hall has said

> ...all his work bears the stamp of his personality. Like Brahms, he has pronounced idiosyncracies, among which his fondness for shifting harmonies is the most constantly obvious. The ceaseless alteration

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[1]Cooper, op. cit., p. 26.

[2]Vincent d'Indy, César Franck, trans. Rosa Newmarch (London: John Lane - Bodley Head Ltd., 1929) pp. 234-235.

[3]Ibid., p. 236.

[4]Ibid., p. 230.

> of chords, the almost unbroken gliding by half-steps, the lithe sinuousness of all the inner voices, seem to wrap his music in a veil, to render it intangible and mystical... Yet, there is a complete absence of sensuousness, even for the most part, of dramatic fire... The structure of his music is strangely inorganic... Arthur Coquard said of him that he thought the most complicated things in music quite naturally.[1]

According to Debussy,

> ...He wrote...so to speak, face to face with the spirit of music, before which he would kneel, uttering at the same time, the most profoundly touching prayer that ever fell from human lips. César Franck served his art with steadfast devotion...[2]

These exalting statements are made by men whose vision may easily have been blurred by the heights of their own emotions. Though there is probably truth in their statements, they must, of course, be considered in the highly emotional context in which they were situated.

Franck exerted a lasting influence on an entire generation of young French musicians.

> He passed on to his students, his own high artistic standards--his idealism, humanity and untainted integrity--as well as his ideas on composition. He filled his pupils with his own enthusiastic devotion to the contrapuntal technique of Bach, and to the principles of absolute, as opposed to dramatic, music. Those who profited most from his instruction became only too willing to bear his torch when they entered the ranks of the professionals.[3]

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[1] Leland Hall, quoted in David Ewen, op. cit., p. 134.

[2] Ibid., p. 132.

[3] Ibid.

The Wagnerian influence on Duparc is not as easily defined. During the years Duparc was actively composing, Wagner's music was only becoming known to the French public, and was being received with only the bitterest opposition. Duparc had earlier acquainted himself with Wagner and with his music, as is illustrated by his journeys to Munich, mentioned in Chapter I. Duparc received much criticism for his support of the Wagnerian movement. Northcote says Duparc retorted to the criticism of many French musicians' enthusiasm concerning Wagner's music, by writing his song "Extase" as a parody on the music of Tristan und Isolde.[1] It is perhaps best to say that Duparc held the same belief as Vincent d'Indy, who said" The spirit of Wagner has breathed on musicians who have been able to understand it and it is through him that we see them strive towards a higher goal aimed at by the majority of their predecessors and contemporaries."[2]

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[1]Northcote, op. cit., p. 30.

[2]Bréville, op. cit., p. 403.

CHAPTER II

THE *MÉLODIE*

Historical Background

Henri Duparc, though he wrote only sixteen *mélodies*, is considered along with Gabriel Fauré to have contributed to the development of the French art song or *mélodie*.[1] The term *mélodie* had been used in France early in the nineteenth century, and had been born out of a union of the French *romance* and the German *Lied*.[2] When the German *Lied* was first introduced into France, it was in a French translation. Although it was regarded by many as a German intrusion, the *Lied* did have some positive effects on French song writing. The simple "air" type of *mélodie* disappeared and a new kind of *mélodie* arose which is characterized by four features:

1. Structure - Strophic form was no longer required. It gave way to many free structures

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[1] See for example: Breville, *op. cit.*, p. 403; Northcote, op. cit., pp. 30-31; and Fritz Noske, *French Song from Berlioz to Duparc* (New York: Dover, 1969), p. 272.

[2] Noske, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-39. The author outlines the detailed history of the French *romance*, and the mutation of the *Lied* into a format and style palatable to the French *sensibilité* and suitable to the French language.

or schematic forms.

2. Vocal part - The square phrase was not always used; the voice was sometimes treated like a recitative.

3. Accompaniment - The piano assumed a more important role in the musical interpretation of the text, and sometimes took the lead in this respect. Orchestral effects are often used, since the art of writing an expressive accompaniment which was idiomatic to the piano was not too advanced.

4. Texts - Interest in verse of a high literary quality increased. Composers began to set poems of Hugo, Lamartine and others whose free structures, run-on lines and broken meters required an abandonment of the square-phrase principle. Romantic poetry also forced recognition of the accompaniment, in order to allow for musical suggestion of that which remains unexpressed in the poem.[1]

Fauré and Duparc have established the intrinsic quality of the French mélodie, just as Schubert, Brahms and Wolfe had done in Germany with regard to the develop-

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[1] Ibid., pp. 35-38.

ment of the Lied. Northcote says

> identity is not a question of forms, or of a contrast in style; it is a difference in idea and expression... The absence of stresses in the French language poses a unique problem in vocal declamation. And this may partly explain why, not infrequently, the distinctive quality of French music may seem idiomatic, rather than stylistic and structural.[1]

The mélodies composed during the 1850's were primarily of a dramatic nature. This is plausible since the major French composers, Gounod, Massé, Reyer, Bizet, Delibes and Massenet, wrote their major works for stage, and their songs show this influence. These borrowed operatic qualities were not favorable to the mélodie; the result was an accompaniment which remained subservient to the voice. "The creation of the genre equivalent to the German Lied was obviously unattainable under such conditions; the mélodie had to be liberated from the domination of the theatre before a true poem for voice and piano could develop."[2]

Saint-Saëns, Lalo and Franck were to contribute to this development in their inauguration of a "renaissance of instrumental music in France."[3] "These instrumentalists raised the mélodie to the level of cham-

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[1]Northcote, op. cit., p. 29.

[2]Noske, op. cit., p. 219.

[3]Ibid.

ber music and paved the way for the great masters, Fauré and Duparc."[1]

By 1865, the mélodie had become an "independent, specifically French genre, able to maintain its position opposite the German Lied . . . German Lieder still exercises some influence, but can no longer overshadow the indigenous characteristics of the mélodie."[2]

The Poets

In an obituary on the death of Fauré, M. Jean Chantevoine said: "Gabriel Fauré (together with Henri Duparc) played in the Parnassien and Symbolist age of France, a part recalling that of Schumann in the romantic age of Germany . . ."[3]

The Parnassiens were a group of poets writing in France during the period 1860-1868. It included poets such as Gautier, de Lisle, Coppée, Sylvestre and Prudhomme.[4] They demanded

> the plastic presentation of themes admitting the freedom and color of the romantics. . . They believed in impersonality; in the refinement and

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[1]Ibid., p. 220.

[2]Ibid., p. 159.

[3]M. Jean Chantevoine, "Gabriel Fauré", in Menstruel (November 14, 1924).

[4]Northcote, op. cit., p. 61.

TABLE 2

THE MÉLODIES

Songs	Dates	Author of Text	Dedication	Remarks
"Chanson Triste"	1868	Jean Lahor	Léon MacSwiney	orchestrated
"Soupir"	1868	Sully Prudhomme	his mother	
"Le Galop"	1868	Sully Prudhomme		
"Sérénade"	1868	Gabriel Marc	Noel Gueneau de Mussy	
"Romance de Mignon"	1868	V. Wilder after Goethe		
"Au pays où se fait la guerre"	1869 or '70	Théophile Gautier	Mlle. Eugénie Vergin	orchestrated
"L'Invitation au Voyage"	1870	Charles Baudelaire	Mme. Henri Duparc	orchestrated
"La Vague et La Cloche"	1871	François Coppée	Vincent d'Indy	orchestrated
"Élégie"	1874	translation of poem by Thomas Moore on death of Robert Emmet	Henri de Lassus	
"Extase"	1878	Jean Lahor	Camille Benoit	

TABLE 2, continued

Songs	Dates	Author of Text	Dedication	Remarks
"Le Manoir de Rosemonde"	1879	Robert de Bonnières	Robert de Bonnières	orchestrated
"Sérénade florentine"	1880-81	Jean Lahor	Henry Cochin	
"Phidylé"	1882	Leconte de Lisle	Ernest Chausson	orchestrated
"Lamento"	1883	Théophile Gautier	Gabriel Fauré	
"Testament"	1883	A. Silvestre	Mme. Henri de Lassus (née Boissonet)	orchestrated
"La Vie antérieure"	1884	Charles Baudelaire	J. Guy de Ropartz	orchestrated

> polish of the word, phrase, rhythm and stanza; . . . in general, they were far more concerned with perfection of form than with pure feeling or emotion.[1]

Following this period, and deriving from it, the Symbolists, in which may be included the poet Charles Baudelaire, took up the partnership with the Parnassiens.[2] "Duparc seems to have been especially attracted by the poet's Romantic aspect as expressed in the desire for (or recollection of) exotic countries that contrast strongly with the banal surroundings of daily life."[3]

All the poetry chosen by Duparc for his song texts is derived from the Parnassien-Symbolist period. Davies has written that "greater consciousness of the value of choosing first-rate poets for setting to music is something which has come about only since Debussy's time."[4] Duparc's work can hardly be judged on this basis, since his output was so small, and his literary attitudes remain unknown. However, he seems "to have had

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[1]Ibid., p. 60.

[2]Ibid., p. 61.

[3]Noske, op. cit., p. 292.

[4]Davies, op. cit., p. 49.

more concrete literary skill than most other composers . . . but this does not appear to have led to a consistently unimpeachable taste in poets."[1]

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[1] Ibid.

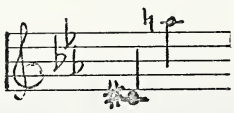
CHAPTER III

THE SONGS

The art songs or *mélodies* of Henri Duparc can be considered as emotionally and poetically isolated situations because they are not part of a larger structure or cycle. Each *mélodie* will be discussed in terms of its melodic structure, its text and poetic form, its piano accompaniment and finally, elements necessary for its performance, including the unified interpretation of accompanist and singer which is an integral part of the *mélodie*. It has already been pointed out in Chapter I that the *mélodie*, like its German counterpart, the *Lied*, requires a perfect balance between the musical and poetic content.

Chanson Triste

Ambitus:



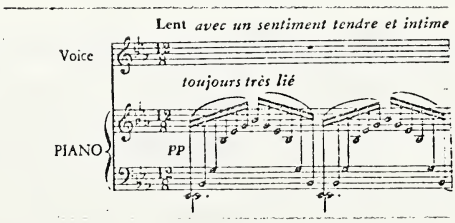
Key: E-flat major

Meter and tempo: $\frac{12}{8}$, Lent avec un sentiment tendre et intime.

The first song to be considered, Chanson triste, is one of the five songs written in 1868, while Duparc was studying with Franck. It was dedicated to Léon MacSwiney, Duparc's father-in-law. In it, Duparc has attempted a dramatic setting of a poem by Jean Lahor, which is an expression of hope, and it is a clear example of Duparc's attitude of intimist. Since there is no alteration of the original text, and text repetitions and omissions do not occur in this mélodie, Duparc demonstrates his ability to manipulate the contents of the poem without altering the stanzas.

Chanson triste is durchkomponiert and, as with all Duparc's songs, begins with a Vorspiel, in this case, one measure in length. There is no presentation here of thematic material to be used later in the mélodie; however, this one-measure introduction establishes a pattern of continuous sixteenth-notes over a tonic pedal:

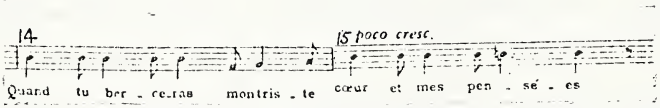
Example 1



There is a three-measure Nachspiel in which fragments of thematic material which have been heard are presented. Twice during the song, there are two-measure piano interludes which resemble the Vorspiel of measure one.

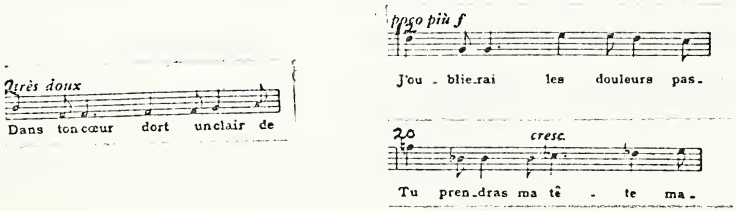
The major rhythmic cell in this song is ♩. , which is used most frequently as ♩♪ . In measure fourteen, this berceuse rhythm is useful as a method of depicting the poetry:

Example 2



Measure two resembles measure twenty in the direction of the melodic line and resembles measure twelve in rhythmic impulse:

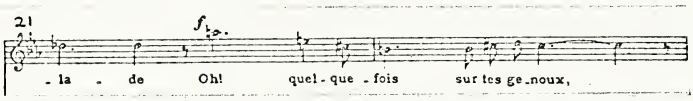
Example 3



Measure twelve and twenty appear after the piano solo two-measure interlude. All three thus appear after the solo piano passages, lending a strong sense of unity to the consecutive sections.

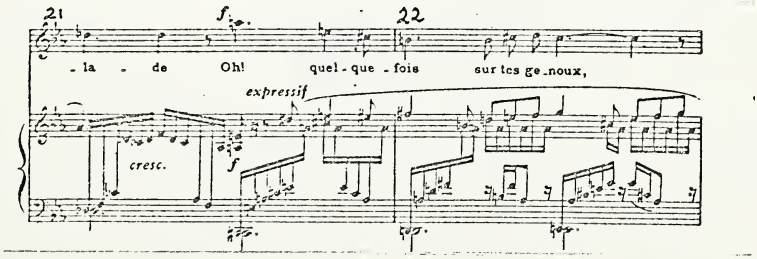
In measure fourteen, the quarter-note A-flat ("Mon") is paralleled in measure thirty-one by a dotted half-note ("Tant"). This appears on either side of the A-natural ("Oh!") in measure twenty-one, creating the simultaneous peak of the ambitus and the emotional climax of the text.

Example 4



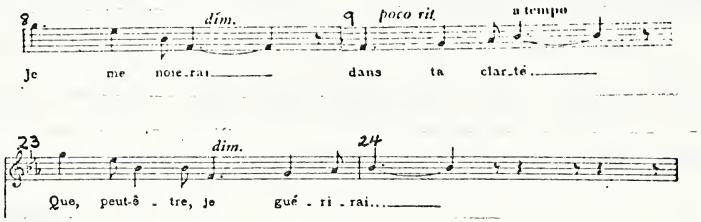
The piano part assumes increasing importance in the synthesis of Chanson triste. Until measure twenty-one, the piano is employed mainly to supply suitable harmonic background. From measures twenty-one through twenty-five and measures twenty-eight through twenty-nine, and finally measure thirty-five, the piano has thematic material which is related to the vocal line through the ascending and descending motion of half-steps. There has been a dramatic change (expressif) in the accompaniment at measure twenty-one, in direct relationship to the A-natural climax in the melody and text:

Example 5



Measures eight and nine and thirty-three through thirty-four are related in melodic material. Also, the poetry of the latter ("que peut-être je guérirai") provides a suitable conclusion to that of the former ("Je me noierai dans ta clarté").

Example 6



The harmonic background is the same in both with the exception of the last half of measure thirty-four, where the piano part assumes thematic material as part of the Nachspiel. There is a tendency to do too much dynamically with this mélodie in both piano and voice parts. Feelings of intimacy should prevail throughout--the lovers being so close to one another should prevent any formidable outburst on the singer's part.

Sérénade

Ambitus:

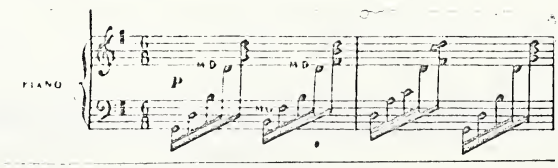
Key: G major

Meter and tempo: $\frac{6}{8}$ Andante

Like Chanson triste, Sérénade is one of the five songs written in 1868. This song is almost totally unknown, and does not appear in any known edition of the Duparc songs.[1] The Bibliothèque Nationale has the original manuscript. Duparc has chosen a text by Gabriel Marc, and has dedicated the song to his friend, Noel Gueneau de Mussy. There are no text alterations.

The most common rhythmic cell is ♩. , which appears as ♩♪ and also as ♫♩ or ♪.♪♫. Sérénade is durchkomponiert, and begins with a two-measure Vorspiel in which no thematic material is presented. The following accompaniment figure continues through to measure thirty-eight, varying only in harmonic structure:

Example 7



In measures thirty-nine through forty, the accompaniment is chordal

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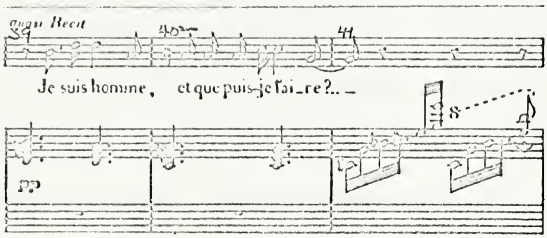
[1] The only print it has been possible to locate appears in Frits Noske, Berlioz to Duparc (New York: Dover Pub., 1969), pp. 274-276.

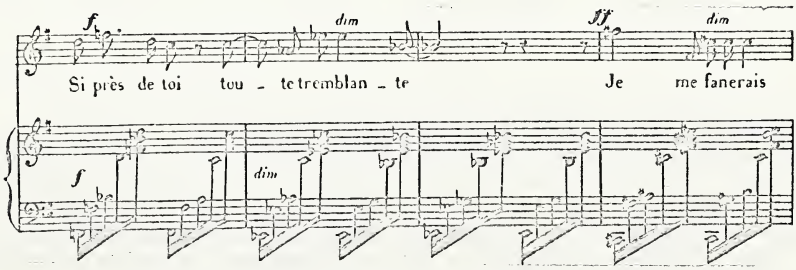
Example 8



while the voice is in a recitative style. The first accompaniment figure resumes, and the mélodie ends with a two measure Nachspiel.

No thematic material appears in the accompaniment of this mélodie. There are several key changes; the first one to E major appears at measure twelve and continues through measure twenty-three. The original G major returns at measure twenty-four. These key changes have been indicated by a new key signature. In measures twenty-eight through thirty-two, the vocal line and accompaniment suggest passing key changes by their chromaticism. This fortissimo F-sharp is the dynamic peak of the musical line.

Example 9

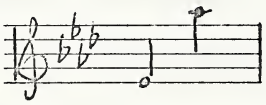


Duparc has marked the measures thirty-eight to forty-one as quasi Recit. This is the first and only

reference or direction to the dramatic interpretation of this song. He has also supplied a characteristic accompaniment figure of solid chords. This is the dramatic high point of the text, and through the change in accompaniment figure, Duparc has made it the dramatic climax of the mélodie. This song is flowing and of a fairly inconsequential emotional nature as befits its title. As in "Chanson triste", the tendency might be to make too much of Duparc's dynamic markings.

Phidylé

Ambitus:



Key: A-flat major

Meter and tempo: C (common time) Lent et calme

This mélodie, written in 1882, is a setting of a text by Leconte de Lisle, the "Parnassien poet often inspired by Greek antiquity".[1] It is one of Duparc's last

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[1] Pierre Bernac, The Interpretation of French Art Song (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), p. 74. This is further evident in Fauré's use of Leconte de Lisle's text in "Lydia" and Chausson's use in "Le Colibri". These can be examined in the editions published by International Music Company, N. Y., Sergius Kagen, ed.

mélodies, and is one of eight which he set for voice and orchestra (See Table 2, p. 20). It is dedicated to Ernest Chausson, his friend and fellow composer.

Phidylé divides into five sections, each one set off by changing tempos and variations in dramatic approach required of both voice and piano parts:

1) The first quatrain marked doux et sans nuances. Bernac suggests a tempo of ♩ = 48 and states that it should seem "absolutely static".[1] Here, the young man, half asleep, describes the beauty of nature about him:

> L'herbe est molle au sommeil sous les frais peupliers,
> Aux pentes des sources moussues,
> Qui dans les prés en fleurs germant par mille issues,
> Se perdent sous les noirs halliers.[2]

The piano accompaniment consists of solid quarter-note chords, emphasizing the unchanging placidity of the prés en fleur. The singer must sing this first part with absolutely no nuance and with a legato and even line in order to depict the beauty and tranquility of the surroundings. There is a one-measure Vorspiel consisting of four quarter-note chords in A-flat

---

[1] Bernac, op. cit., p. 74.

[2] "The grass is soft for sleeping under the fresh poplars
on the slopes by the mossy springs
which in the flowery meadows arise in a thousand rills
to be lost under dark thickets."

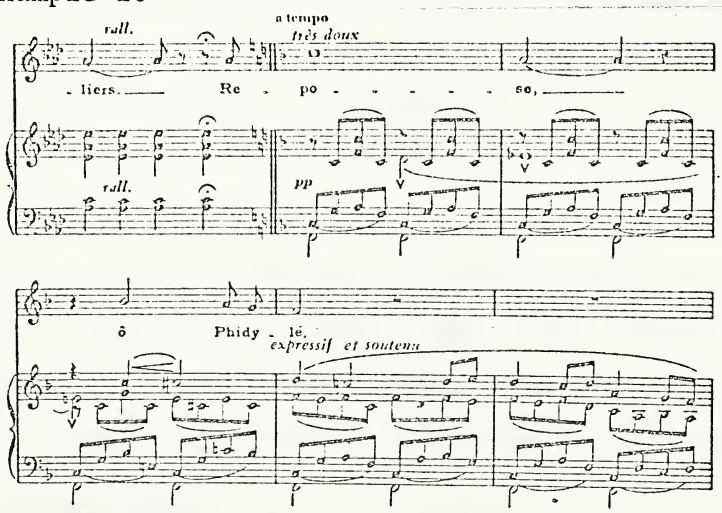
major.

2) the first two lines of the second quatrain are marked très doux. Bernac has suggested ♩ = 66 (poco rubato) for this section. The mélodie now moves out of a descriptive natural mood into the sphere of dialogue and human communication. The young man tenderly addresses the girl in her sleep:

> Repose, Ô Phidylé! Midi sur les feuillages
> Rayonne et t'invite au sommeil![1]

Here the piano part assumes a more important role, including the use of some thematic material. Duparc has accordingly marked it expressif et soutenu.

Example 10



[1]"Rest, O Phidylé! the midday sun on the leaves is shining and invites you to sleep!"

3) the last two lines of the second quatrain marked un peu plus vite. Bernac has suggested a tempo of ♩ = 72, which changes to ♩ = 50 with the indication animato ("un chaud parfum")[1]. Here, the young man describes the noontide splendor about him:

> un chaud parfum circule au détour des sentiers
> La rouge fleur des blés s'incline,
> Et les oiseaux, rasant de l'aile la colline,
> Cherchent l'ombre des églantiers.[2]

This section requires a warmth in the voice that is direct and objective, and is without sentimentality. The rallentando begins only in the measure "l'ombre des églantiers", and this brings back the second tempo of ♩ = 66. There are several key changes in this section, the longest being in the dominant key of E-flat major. The piano part has been gradually increased in the pattern

4) This section is like section two in mood and tempo, and the first six measures of section two are repeated a minor third higher. The singer repeats "Repose, Ô Phidylé!" three times, each one separated by almost two measures of silence in the voice

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[1] Bernac, op. cit., p. 75.

[2] "a warm fragrance haunts the winding paths
the red poppy of the cornfield droops
and the birds, skimming the hill on the wing
seek the shade of the sweet briar."

part, and each being different than the other in subtlety and inflexion. It is up to the singer to carry the intensity through the entire section, even though the role of the piano is more important here. It changes from an accompaniment like that of section two to that of section three, and finally to something new but not unlike section one.

5) This section coincides with the last three lines of the text, and is marked ampleur. The second tempo ♩ = 66 is probably the most suitable in order to allow for the breadth of the phrase Duparc has intended.

> Mais quand l'Astre incliné sur sa courbe éclatante
> Verra ses ardeurs s'apaiser
> Que ton plus beau sourire et ton meilleur baiser
> Me récompensent de l'attente![1]

The melodic line builds dramatically until "Me récompensent", marked piu forte, the A-flat being the high point of the phrase and the phrase being the dramatic climax of the mélodie.

The conclusion of the song is left to the piano part, and there are nine measures in this Nachspiel. It

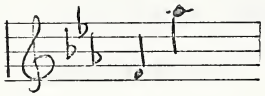
---

[1]"But when the sun sinking lower on its resplendent orbit,
finds its fire abated
Let your loveliest smile and your most ardent kiss reward me for my waiting!"

must be played very lyrically and can be compared to section three. It is a very dramatic section and can be best explained as an extension and conclusion of the vocal line "Me récompensent de l'attente!".

L'Invitation au Voyage

Ambitus:



Meter and Tempo: $\frac{6}{8}$, presque lent

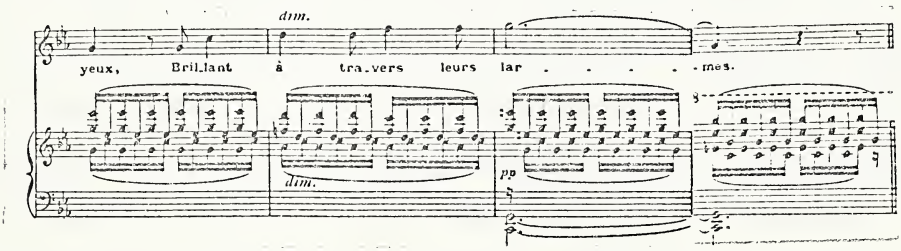
Key: C minor

This mélodie was written in 1870 on a poem by Charles Baudelaire. Duparc chose to set the first and last of three stanzas of the text. The poet expresses a desire to live in the country of his dreams, a country of canals and flowers that is described in the poem ("Vois sur ces canaux, Dormir ces vaisseaux . . ." and "Les canaux, la ville entière, D'hyacinthe et d'or"). This is not a sorrowful melody, but rather one of ecstatic joy which increases as the vision is realized.[1] Bernac has suggested a tempo at the presque

[1]Bernac, op. cit., p. 77.

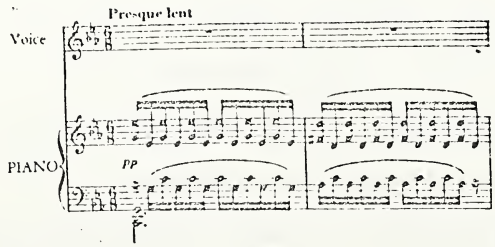
lent of ♩. = 52.[1] The singer must take care to give full value to the dotted quarter-notes. Duparc has indicated that the entire stanza be sung doux et tendre, only achieving the level of mezzo-forte at "les soleils mouillés". At brillant à travers leurs larmes , in measure twenty-eight, a beautiful vocal effect can be achieved by observing Duparc's indication très doux, and by carrying a diminuendo through the rising phrase to a pianissimo in measure thirty.

Example 11



The piano part is an unchanging figure of sixteenth-notes:

Example 12



[1] Idem.

There are two measures of Vorspiel. The entire first section, with the exception of measures twenty-five through twenty-nine, is played over a tonic pedal, which occurs in every other measure throughout. (See example 12 above.) The piano part is marked pianissimo and this remains until measure nineteen, where crescendo-decrescendo markings occur through measure twenty-one. In the latter half of measure twenty-two, at "Pour mon esprit", retenez un peu occurs in the piano part. The a tempo resumes in measure twenty-two. At this point, the lower sixteenth-notes occur an octave higher and continue thus to the end of the section. The only other dynamic change in the piano part occurs at measure twenty-four and is marked piano which returns to pianissimo at measure thirty. Duparc has given the accompanist very little freedom as regards dynamics in order to maintain the atmosphere of doux et tendre.

Section two is eight measures in length and the tempo marking is un peu plus vite. Bernac suggests ♩. = 69;[1] the time signature is $\frac{9}{8}$. Dynamic markings are unchanged, the pianissimo remaining throughout. However, the accompaniment figure is different, consisting of large chords over a constant C pedal, beginning in

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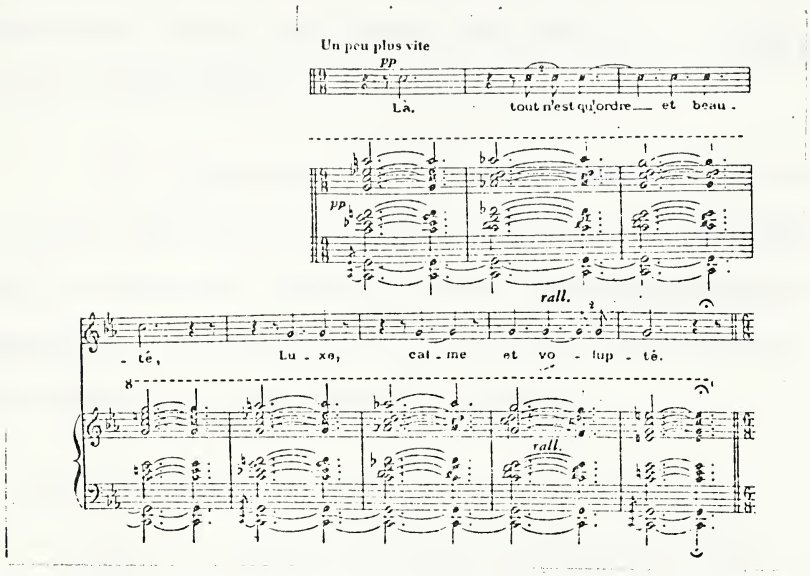
[1]Bernac, op. cit., p. 77.

C minor and ending in C major.

Example 13



Even though the vocal line is marked pianissimo, the singer should perform the entire section with intensity, "in the ecstasy of a wonderful vision".[1]

In order to link the second stanza with the refrain, "it is better if there is no breath between the major and the minor chord in the piano part".[2] The tempo indication in most editions is I-er Mouvement, but Duparc is said to have liked it a little faster than the presque lent of the first section.[3] The piano part re-

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[1] Bernac, op. cit., p. 78.

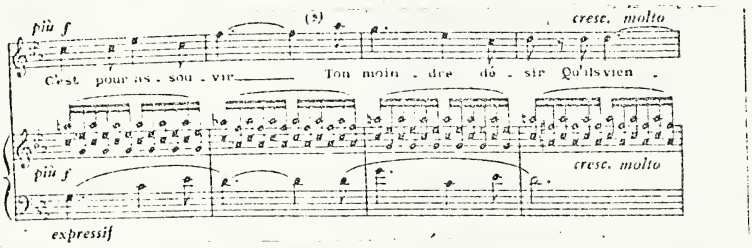
[2] Idem.

[3] Landormy, Paul, op. cit., p. 55.

turns to its former pattern of sixteenth-notes over the tonic pedal. This time, both voice and piano dynamic indications begin with piano and work up to a forte at measure fifty-four.

The crescendo should be established gradually, so as to reach the first big climax of the mélodie at "Qu'ils viennent" which is marked crescendo molto and expressif. At measures fifty through fifty-three, the piano part has some thematic material.

Example 14



The last section of the mélodie returns to the time signature $\frac{9}{8}$, the key changes from E-flat to C-major, and the tempo indication is un peu plus vite. The accompaniment figure is completely different than that of either sections one or two, and this arpeggiated sixteenth-note figure remains through thirty-one measures, that is, to the end of the song. Bernac suggests a tempo of ♩. = 69.[1]

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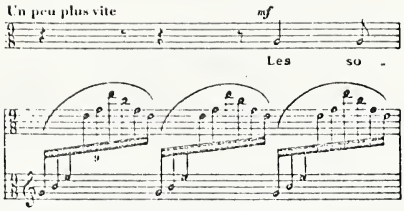
[1]Bernac, op. cit., p. 78.

Example 15



This last part of the song should be sung broadly and with much intensity. The singer, by the breadth of his declamation and richness of his voice, can suggest "the sumptuousness of a sunset whose colours are all warm, rich and brilliant."[1]

The second refrain is marked pianissimo, but both singer and pianist must maintain the intensity of the previous section. This second refrain must be sung with a greater exaltation than that of the first refrain (measures thirty-two to thirty-nine). The piano part again has some thematic material which Duparc has marked cantabile.

The voice is silent for the last six measures of the song. Duparc has marked this passage en diminuant jusqu'à la fin and has conceived the rallentando rhythmically with increasingly larger note values.

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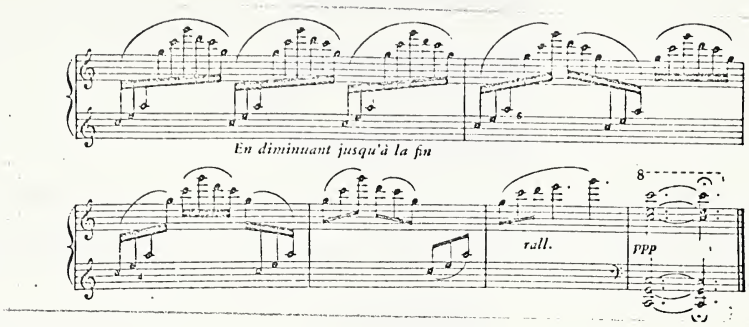
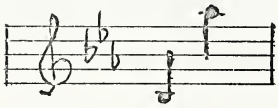
[1] Bernac, op. cit., p. 78.

Example 16



La Vie Antérieure

Ambitus:

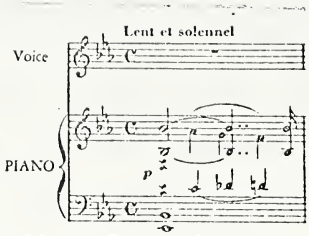


Key: E-flat major

Meter and Tempo: C Lent et solennel

This is Duparc's last mélodie, written in 1885 on a sonnet of Charles Baudelaire. There has been no text alteration. The setting of the first quatrain preceded by a one-measure Vorspiel is built on a one-measure cell which is repeated continuously fourteen times to the conclusion of the first section of the mélodie.

Example 17



The immobility of the harmony, rhythmic firmness and chant-like vocal line form the grand introduction, or the vast porticoes of the mélodie:

> J'ai longtemps habité sous de vastes portiques
> Que les soleils marins teignaient de mille feux
> Et que leurs grands piliers, droits, et majestueux
> Rendaient pareils, le soir, au grottes basaltiques.[1]

In consideration of Duparc's tempo marking lent et solennel, Bernac has suggested a tempo of ♩ = 56.[2] The entire section should be sung without nuance and perfectly legato. Duparc has indicated a dynamic marking of mezzo-forte in order that the voice has enough scope for a declamation which is rich and broad.

At measure fifteen, the character of the mélodie changes. The text

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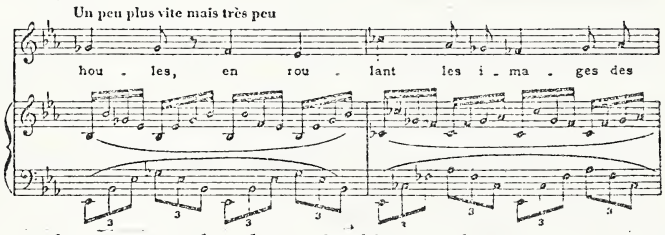
[1]Bernac, op. cit., p. 78.
"For a long time I dwelt beneath vast porticoes
coloured by the marine suns with a thousand fires
whose great columns, straight and majestic
resembled, at evening, basaltic grottoes."

[2]Idem.

Les houles en roulant les images des cieux
Mêlaient d'une façon solennelle et mystique
Les tout-puissants accords de leur riche musique
Aux couleurs de couchant reflété par mes yeux,[1]

is coupled here with a piano part which is full of agitation (produced by the three-against-four rhythmic structure of the part) suggesting the vast motion of the surging waves, and satisfying Duparc's indication of un peu plus vite mais très peu.

Example 18



At measure nineteen, he has indicated a poco a poco crescendo, which leads further into a large crescendo, culminating at measures twenty-eight through thirty-two. There is also a marked accelerando which is carried through twelve measures, beginning at measure twenty-one.[2]

After the second elaborated arpeggio in the

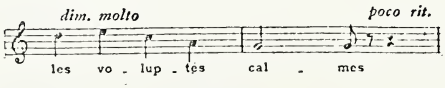
---

[1]"The surging waves, rolling the mirrored skies
mingled in a solemn and mystical way
the mighty harmonies of their sonorous music
With the colours of the sunset reflected in my eyes."

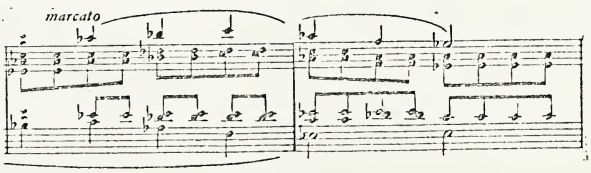
[2]Duparc has marked it twice: augmentez et pressez peu à peu jus qu'au 1-er Mouvement and augmentez et pressez toujours. . .

piano part, Duparc has marked a fermata, and a great deal of dramatic effect can be achieved here if the silence is long enough. When the voice part appears, Duparc has marked long largement et à pleine voix. This section, being the climax of the poet's vision, demands all the fullness and power of the voice. The dynamic marking is fortissimo, and the tempo returns to that of the first part ♩ = 56. The key signature has also changed to C major, and the accompaniment has become chordal in eighth notes. Duparc indicates, at measure thirty-six, a diminuendo molto, which applies to both piano and voice parts. At measure thirty-eight, he has inserted one measure of $\frac{2}{4}$ and marked it presque à demivoix et sans nuance comme en une vision. He has created an extraordinarily poetic atmosphere for both pianist and singer--the splendid vision, voluptuously calm and secretly painful. At measures forty-two and forty-three, where the voice sings "Qui me refraîchissaient le front avec des palmes", there appears in the piano part, in canon, the previous vocal line of "dans les voluptés calmes".

Example 19 (a)

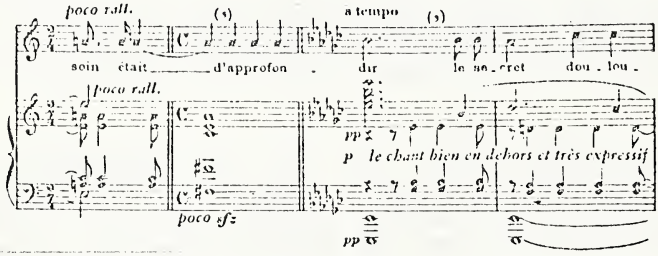


Example 19 (b)



At measure forty-five, the tempo returns to $\frac{2}{4}$ again for one measure, then in the following measure, at the words "d'approfondir", Duparc has indicated a rallentando on the three quarter-notes, the last note prolonged to emphasize the modulation to E-flat minor and also the return piano subito to the first tempo.

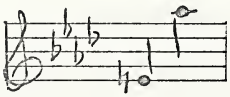
Example 20



Duparc has marked this section for voice and piano le chant en dehors et très expressif. The ten-measure conclusion in the piano part must prolong to its end "the depth, intensity and magic of this glorious mélodie".[1]

Élégie

Ambitus:



Key: F minor

Meter and tempo: $\frac{9}{8}$ Lent

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[1]Bernac, op. cit., p. 80.

The text of this song is an elegy on the death of Robert Emmet by Thomas Moore. It was originally in English, but Duparc has used a French translation.[1]

Oh! Breathe not his name, let it sleep in the shade,
Where cold and unhonoured, his relics are laid
Sad, silent and dark, be the tears that we shed
As the night-dew that falls on the grass o'er his head.

But the night-dew that falls, though in silence it weeps,
Shall brighten with verdure the grave where he sleeps,
And the tear that we shed, though in secret it rolls,
Shall long keep his memory green in our souls.

Oh! ne murmurez pas son nom! qu'il dorme dans l'ombre,
Où froide et sans honneur repose sa dépouille.
Muettes, tristes, glacées, tombent nos larmes
Comme la rosée de la nuit qui sur sa tête humecte le gazon.

Mais la rosée de la nuit bien qu'elle pleure en silence,
Fera briller la verdure sur sa couche,
Et nos larmes en secret répandues,
Conserveront sa mémoire fraîche et verte dans nos coeurs.

The two stanzas of the poem express different feelings, and this is conveyed in the song. At first, the poet deplores in calm desperation the death of an Irish patriot, and then he is able to convince himself that this despair will help to immortalize the memory of the dead man.

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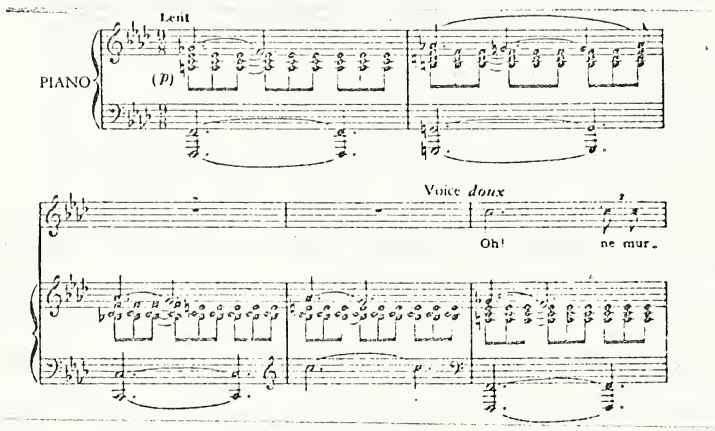
[1]Bernac and Noske suggest that this may be Duparc's own translation.

The mélodie begins with a four-measure Vorspiel, and when the voice enters, the preceding four measures are repeated, providing the accompaniment of triplet eighth-notes against dotted-half/dotted-quarter notes.

Example 21



Bernac has suggested a tempo of ♩. = 50, a slow tempo, but fitting in terms of the text.[1] Duparc has marked the voice entry doux and at measure fourteen, the voice begins a poco più forte increasing with the crescendo markings through measure seventeen, followed by a diminuendo molto in measure eighteen and très doux at measure twenty, which is the beginning of the last line of stanza one.

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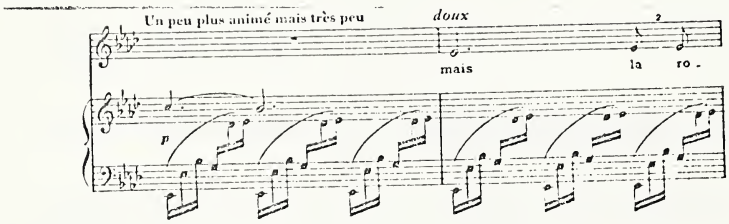
[1]Bernac, op. cit., p. 70.

At measure twenty-seven, the second stanza begins, and the accompaniment changes in compliance with the changing thoughts of the poet. The meter remains $\frac{9}{8}$, but the accompaniment figure changes to

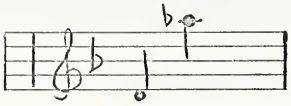
Example 22



This coincides with Duparc's indication un peu plus animé mais très peu, thus being suggestive of a little more movement. There is a slight crescendo which is carried through the first line of the text followed by a greater crescendo, into measures forty and forty-one. At the height of the ambitus, Duparc has marked élargissez and suivez la voix in the voice and piano parts respectively. At measure forty-four, coinciding with the falling vocal line, he has marked diminuendo e poco rallentando in both piano and voice parts. The five-measure Nachspiel is marked a tempo and diminuendo. A little ritardando is perhaps suggested by the prolonged notes in the final two measures of this mélodie.

Le Manoir de Rosemonde

Ambitus:



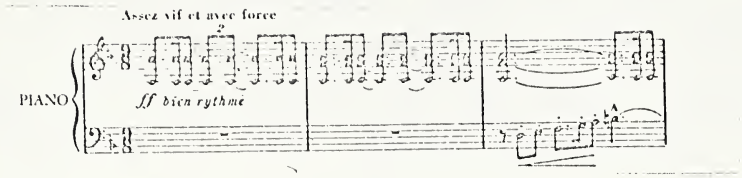
Key: D minor

Meter and tempo: $\frac{9}{8}$ Assez vif et avec force

Duparc chose a text by Robert de Bonnières and dedicated this mélodie to him in 1879. This poem consists of two sharply contrasting parts. In the first part, the poet bitterly describes his arduous life, and in the second, describes more peacefully his journey far away to die, never having discovered the inaccessible domain of the beloved of his dreams. Duparc has combined both the text and piano accompaniment in an integrated expression of these feelings.

Rhythm is of prime importance to both singer and pianist throughout, and Duparc has marked the piano part bien rythmé, beginning the first measure of a three-measure Vorspiel. The rhythmic and accompaniment pattern for this first section of seventeen measures is

Example 23



Bernac has suggested a tempo of ♩. = 88 and that it be precise and firm.[1] The dynamic markings in this first section are constantly forte and fortissimo. The voice part is marked déclamé and must be a strong and "biting" declamation.

De sa dent soudaine et vorace
Comme un chien, l'amour m'a mordu,
En suivant mon sang répandu,
Va, tu pourras suivre ma trace.[2]

The second part of this mélodie, beginning at measure eighteen, consisting of the last two stanzas or eight lines of the sonnet is in a different mood and a different tempo: it is slower (Bernac suggests ♩ = 60). However, it remains precise and rhythmic even though it is softer and more legato. At measure thirty-two, he

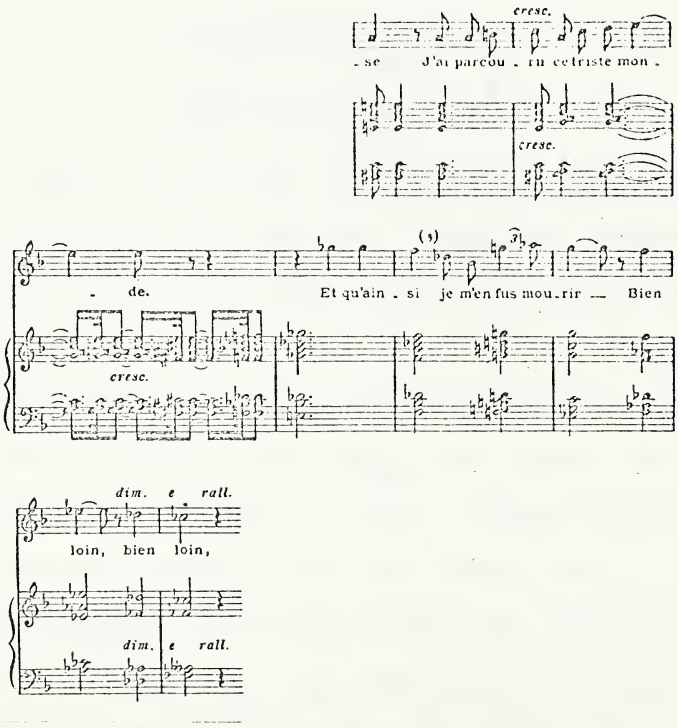
---

[1]Bernac, op. cit., p. 65.

[2]"With its sudden and voracious fang
like a dog, Love has bitten me.
By following the blood I have shed,
Go! You will be able to follow my trail."

has changed the meter to $\frac{3}{4}$ and indicated a slower tempo with a marking of plus lent. Duparc has marked a crescendo over the line "J'ai parcouru ce triste monde" and a forte on "Et qu'ainsi je m'en fus mourir", which is the height of the ambitus and also the climax of the text.

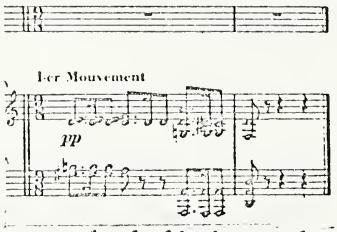
Example 24



At measure thirty-four, the voice part is marked expressif and piano ("En passant par où j'ai passé. . .").

At measure thirty-seven, the accompaniment figure changes to [3/4] and , followed by in measure forty-one and . . . from measure forty-two through fifty-two. The original rhythmic figure and meter of the first part return for the last two measures of the three-measure Nachspiel.

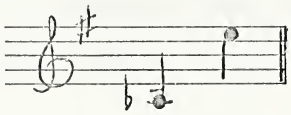
Example 25



There is a marked diminuendo e rallentando, which is carried from measure forty-five through fifty-one in both voice and piano parts. At measure forty-four through forty-five, the singer must attempt to create the impression of increasing distance. The first "bien loin" will be forte, the second will be piano, thereby effecting an echo. Bernac suggests a lento tempo at measure fifty-one with a return to Premier mouvement in measure fifty-two. Measures fifty-three and fifty-four are reminiscent of what has gone before, and Duparc has emphasized this by marking them pianissimo.

La Vague et la Cloche

Ambitus:



Key: E minor

Meter and tempo: $\frac{3}{4}$ Assez vite et tumultueux

The poet, François Coppée, tells of two successive nightmares, the meaning of which remains a mystery, in spite of his frantic quest. Both nightmares, the stormy night and the ringing bell, are clearly suggested in the music, especially in the piano part. This is a difficult song, and requires of both singer and pianist "a good technique as well as a warm temperament".[1]

Duparc wrote this song in 1871, and dedicated it to his friend and colleague, Vincent d'Indy. It was scored for orchestra and was originally published for medium voice; Bernac suggests baritone, because of the rich quality of sound available.[2]

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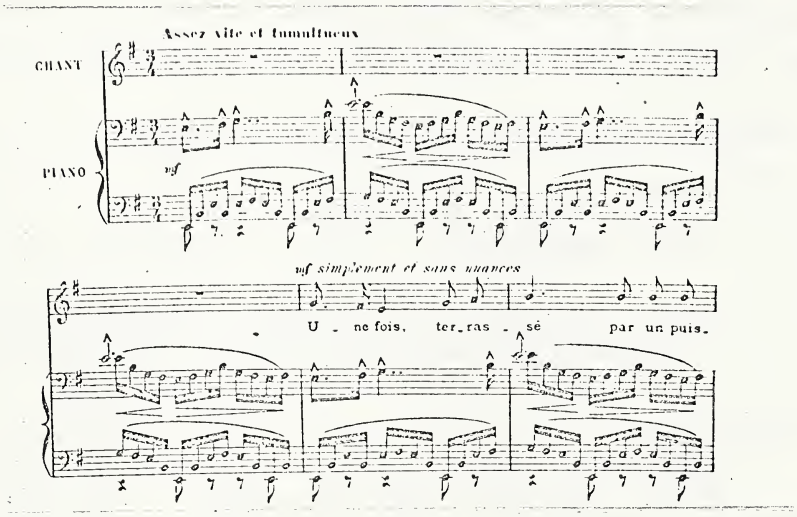
[1] Bernac, op. cit., p. 67.

[2] Bernac, op. cit., p. 67.

The mélodie begins with a four-measure Vorspiel. The first two measures are repeated twice, and after the entry of the voice in measure five, are repeated five more times in the piano part.

Example 26



Duparc has marked special accents (∧) in the piano part. The voice enters at measure five and Duparc has marked this mezzo-forte simplement et sans nuances. This continues through measure fourteen, where the character of the accompaniment and tempo changes. Bernac has suggested a tempo of 𝅗𝅥 = 92/96 for the first fourteen measures.

Une fois, terrasé par un puissant breuvage,
J'ai rêvé que parmi les vagues et le bruit

De la mer.[1]

At measure fifteen, the meter changes to $\frac{9}{8}$ in a broad tempo. Bernac suggests ♩. = 63. Duparc has indicated plus large, and this applies throughout the following five measures. The tempo returns to $\frac{3}{4}$ at measure nineteen, as well as the beginning two-measure theme of the first part. At measure twenty-three, the piano part remains in $\frac{3}{4}$ while the voice part changes to $\frac{9}{8}$ meter. This section requires a vocal approach which is declamatory, and at a fortissimo level.

Je voguais sans fanal dans la nuit
Morne rameur n'ayant plus l'espoir du rivage
L'océan me crachait ses baves sur le front
Et le vent me glaçait d'horreur jusqu' aux entrailles
Les vagues s'écroulaient ainsi que des murailles
Avec ce rythme lent qu'un silence interrompt.
Puis tout changea. La mer et sa noire mêlée
Sombrèrent. Sous mes pieds s'effrondra le plancher
De la barque.[2]

After the broad and rather free "Puis, tout changea", it

---

[1]"Once laid low by a potent drink
I dreamed that amid the waves and the roar
of the sea."

[2]"I rowed without a ship's lantern in the night
mournful oarsman with no more hope of reaching the shore.
The ocean spat its foam on my brow
And the wind froze me to the entrails with horror
The waves crashed down like walls
With that slow rhythm punctuated with silence
Then all changed. The sea and its dark conflict
sank down. Under my feet the bottom
Of the boat gave way."

is important to observe the a tempo, even on the words "le plancher de la barque".

Measures fifty-three to fifty-seven constitute a four-measure piano Nachspiel which brings the first nightmare to an end. The accompanist should take care to wait long enough before going on, since Duparc has indicated a fermata and long pause.

The piano part states the "bell" theme of the second nightmare in two measures, marked lourd ("heavy") by Duparc. Bernac suggests a tempo of ♩ = 69 and that it remain steady throughout.[1] The piano and voice parts become increasingly frantic throughout the following twenty measures to the constant tolling of the bell figure.

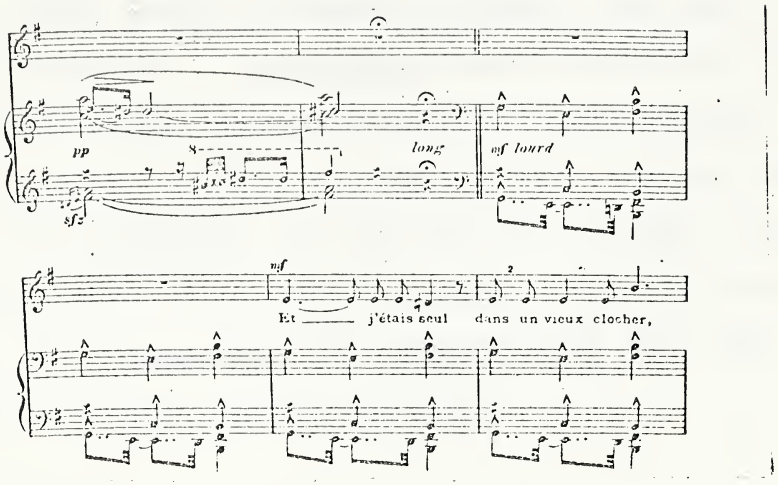
> Et j'étais seul dans un vieux clocher
> Chevauchant avec rage une cloche ébranlée.
> J'étreignais la criarde opiniâtrement,
> Convulsif et fermant dans l'effort
> mes paupiers,
> Le grondement faisait trembler les vieilles pierres,
> Tant j'activais sans fin le lourd balancement.[2]

---

[1] Bernac, op. cit., p. 67.

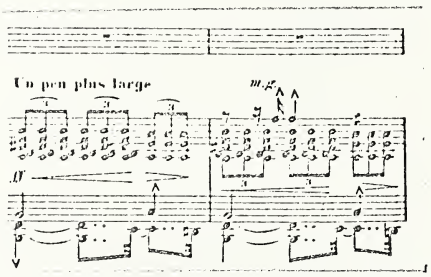
[2] "And I was alone in an old belfry
riding furiously on an old bell.
I stubbornly gripped the clamorous thing
violently and closing my eyes with effort
the booming made the old stones tremble
so unceasingly did I activate the heavy
swinging."

Example 27



This section comes to an abrupt end; the tolling bell remains, but Duparc has given the accompaniment of the last section a different character.

Example 28



He has marked it <u>un peu plus large</u>. After three measures, the voice enters with a most pathetic interrogation:

Pourquoi n'as-tu pas dit, o rêve où
Dieu nous mène
Pourquoi n'as-tu pas dit s'ils ne
finiraient pas
L'inutile travail et l'éternel fracas

Dont est faite la vie, hélas, la vie humaine![1]

This should be sung in a broader tempo and should reach only a mezzo-forte level, which after so much drama before seems more expressive and intense. Duparc has set the last statement apart by marking the voice part élargissez and the piano part suivez. The song ends with a six-measure Nachspiel, which is marked piano, then pianissimo, then pianississimo with the tolling bell audible even to the end.

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[1] "Why did you not say, O dream,
Where God is leading us
Why did you not say if there is
to be no end
to the useless toil and the eternal strife
of which, alas, human life is made!"

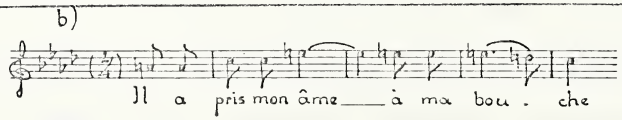
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In his mélodies, Duparc most often transforms a text into prose, rather than allowing the musical phrase to follow the verse structure. "To compensate for the lack of periodic phrases, this style of writing necessitates an extremely careful prosody, a requirement generally satisfied by Duparc's melodic line."[1]

Duparc makes extensive use of a prosodic formula used by his predecessors, that of a strong beat followed by a syncopation. One example of many to be found in his works is:

Example 29



Duparc's ambitus tends to be expansive, and his use of wide intervals confers an intensity of expression

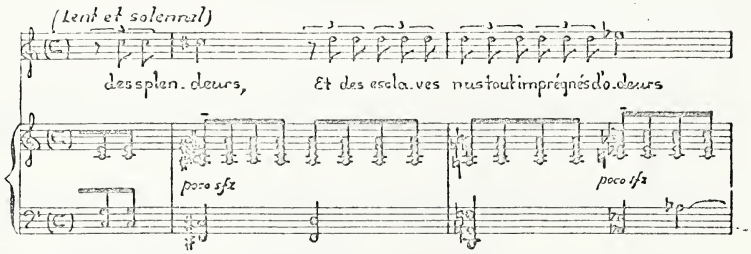
[1]Noske, op. cit., p. 281.

which contrasts with his restraint at other times. He also makes use of augmented intervals in many situations.

Example 30

On the other hana, some of Duparc's songs show a limited ambitus; the voice declaims on a single note as in the refrains of L'Invitation au Voyage and the final two pages of La Vie Antérieure.

Example 31



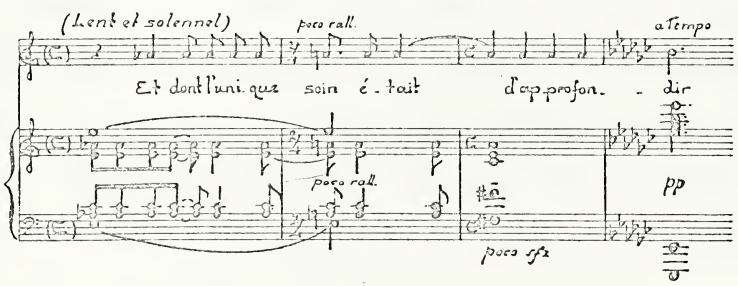
Duparc's choice of high voice for all but two of the sixteen mélodies is significant. He had definite views about the human voice and about singers, as well as about song-writing.[1] Northcote states that

[1]Northcote, op. cit., p. 56.

> he was not overly fond of powerful voices as exaggerated tonal contrasts . . . preferred what he called the 'violin-voice,' capable of fluent, flexible phrasing and real intensity of tone . . . For him, vocal declamation was a melodic utterance which, by means of the singer's impeccable diction, would always be in perfect accord with the natural inflections . . .[1]

Duparc's harmonies contain some unexpected progressions; he juxtaposes unrelated chords, the relationship of which can be explained theoretically, "but which further impress the ear as isolated elements."[2] La Vie Antérieure provides many examples of these progressions:

Example 32



The descending interval of the minor ninth pervades entire pieces such as Soupir, Élégie and Testament. This is a procedure attributed by many writers to Wagner's

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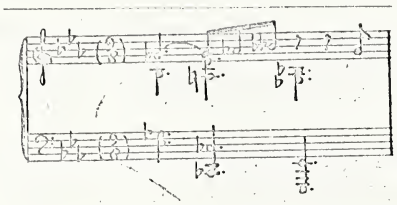
[1] Idem.

[2] Noske, op. cit., p. 286.

influence,[1] just as the use of the subdominant chord with augmented sixth passing directly to the tonic is a recollection of his teacher, Cesar Franck.[2]

Example 33



Lastly, for Duparc the role of the piano is no longer that of a support, but rather that of an equal collaborator in the expression of the poetic content and in many instances, he has placed the piano part on equal terms with the voice--Duparc was capable of assimilating traits of his predecessors and contemporaries, "and making of them, an individual language that, without hiding its origins, from then on belongs only to himself."[3]

Many characteristics of the onset of depression are, perhaps, evident in the music of Henri Duparc: "a total absence of cheerfulness, a penchant for nostalgic

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[1]See for example, Fritz Noske, op. cit., and Sydney Northcote, op. cit.

[2]Noske, op. cit., p. 289.

[3]Ibid.

sentiments, and the 'obscurity' of some of his accompaniments."[1] Duparc was extremely self-critical, and destroyed many of his early works as well as those he tried to write when he became ill. He had for some time planned an opera, Roussalka, to be based on the novel by Pushkin. He wrote and rewrote the first act several times and today only a tell-tale title page remains.[2] Davies says he anticipated every difficulty, and his reaction was that of a man who was helpless to avert a disaster. He goes on to say that the state of hysteria is evidence of his success in repressing his psychological symptoms, causing them to develop into physical symptoms.[3] "In Duparc's case, his depression weighed so heavily on him that they combined to crush the vitality of his genius.[4]

The songs of Henri Duparc reveal "that he is not satisfied to make words sing but translates the poet's very thoughts and feelings. His songs inaugurate the epoch when the mélodie becomes a preferred meeting for the greatest French composers, who confide to it their most intimate and most profound aspira-

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[1]Noske, op. cit., p. 294.

[2]See page 66 for a facsimile of this page.

[3]Davies, op. cit., p. 54.

[4]Idem.

tions."[1]

Within the limits of French art song, Duparc's achievements in comparison with other prolific composers, such as Debussy and Fauré, are slight. "Yet he brought a nobility and capaciousness to the mélodie which it has neither been aspired to nor exceeded, since his time."[2] Francis Poulenc, whose art songs bring this era of the mélodie to a close, once said of Duparc:

> Les mélodies de Duparc sont très belles. C'est seul musicien qui a pu transposer Baudelaire musicalement. Duparc me fait toujours penser au peintre Bazille qui, avec tout juste quelques tableaux, occupe une place de choix dans la peinture française. Avec douze mélodies, Duparc est un grand musicien.[3]

"La Vie Antérieure" is sung by an old man dreaming of his past; the wild joy of youth awakens in him

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[1]Noske, op. cit., p. 294.

[2]Davies, op. cit., p. 55.

[3]Quoted in Laurence Davies, The Gallic Muse, p. 55. (The number of songs should read sixteen in view of the recent research.)

> "The songs of Henri Duparc are very beautiful. He is the only musician who was able to translate Baudelaire musically. Duparc makes me think of the painter Bazille who, with only a few paintings, occupies aplace of honor in French painting. With only twelve mélodies, Duparc is a great musician."

again, but he is unable to conquer any feelings of sadness, the echoes of which die away in a majestic, long, piano epilogue. This song provides a fitting epilogue to the life and music of Henri Duparc.

Facsimile of the autograph score of La Roussalka

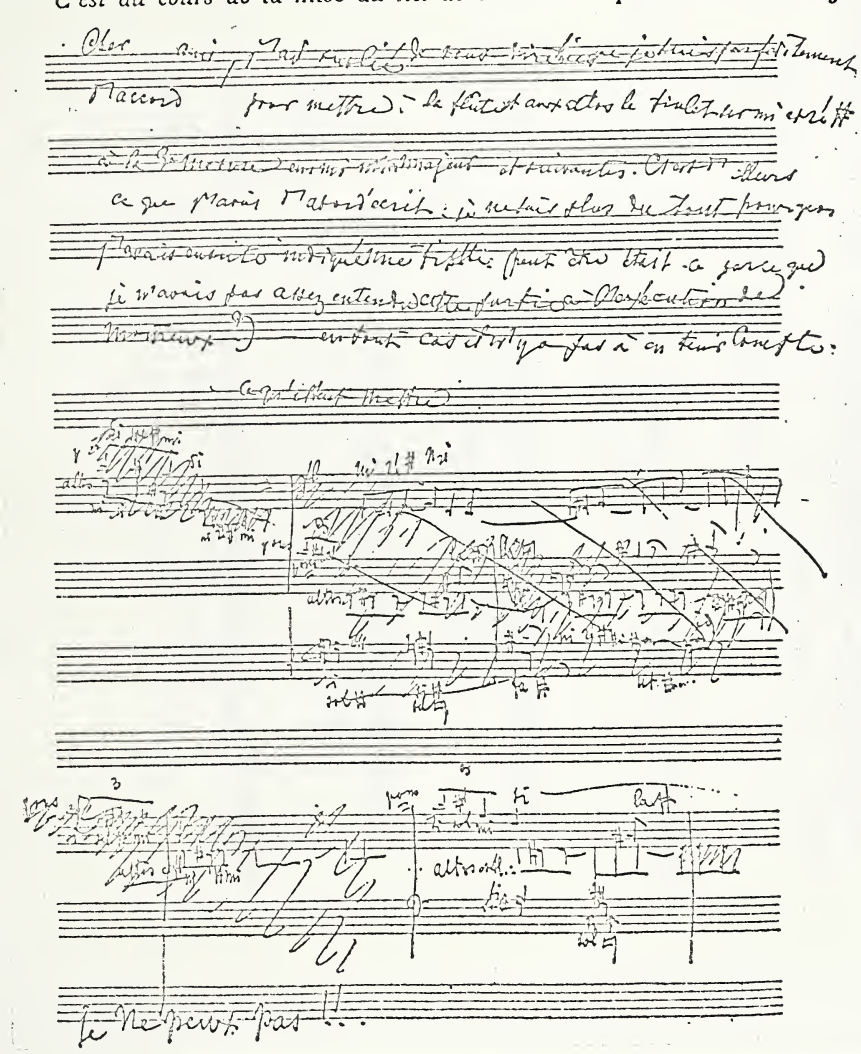
En 1912-1913, Henri Duparc vivait à Clarens. J'étais jeune chef à Montreux ; j'eus charge de mettre au net ses brouillons d'orchestration.

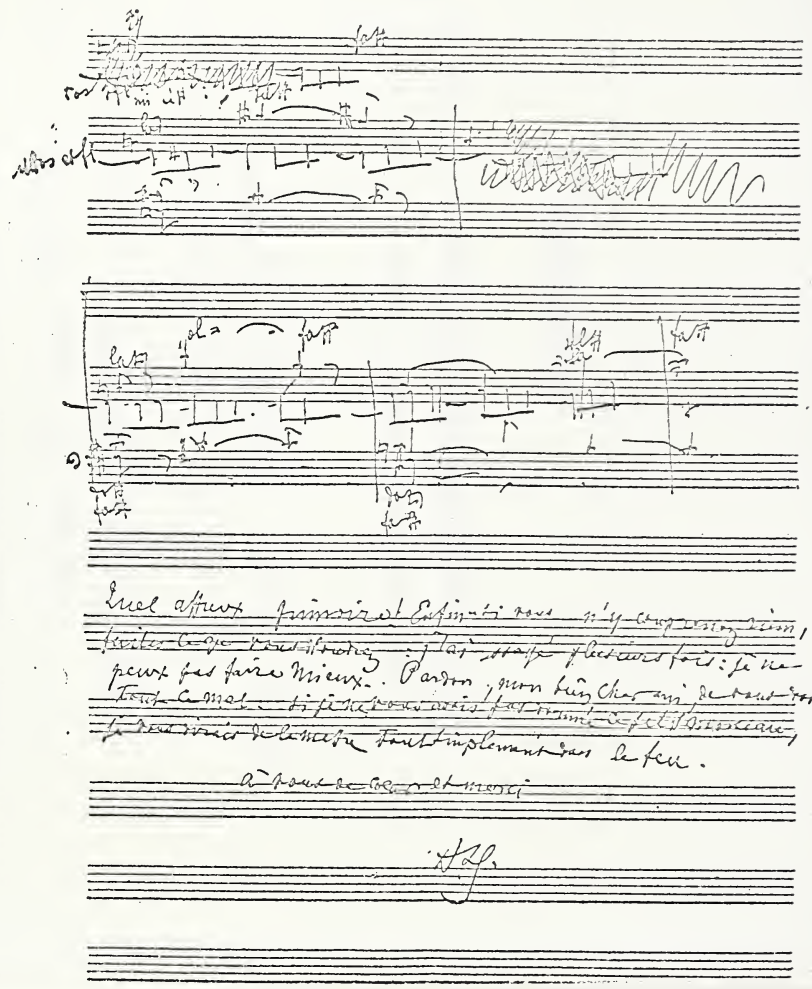
Il avait eu un regain d'activité : il essaya alors de reprendre deux entr'actes de Roussalka : Aux Étoiles *— dédié à Lacerda et édité — et une* Danse lente *qu'il me dédiait (et restée inédite).*

C'est au cours de la mise au net de ce morceau qu'il voulut m'envoyer quelques corrections et m'écrivit cette page où l'écriture marque l'insécurité de la main et de l'œil, et où, après des essais infructueux (on voit par exemple qu'il a écrit un ré pour un si, son champ visuel étant plus étroit que la portée) il note ce cri tragique : « Je ne peux pas ».

Voici ce document, témoignage pathétique d'un esprit lucide que ses organes trahissent.

ERNEST ANSERMET.





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